

**Council, 23 January 2019**

**Questions from Councillors**

**Wards:** All

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### **Report summary**

Questions and answers submitted by Councillors, in accordance with Standing Order 12, are set out below.

## **1. Councillor Becca Thackray**

**To: Cabinet Member for Finance, Andy Wilson**

### **Council reserves**

Will the Cabinet member look at increasing the council's reserves by less than is currently proposed in order to mitigate the terrible effects of the Council's proposed cuts in funding to children's centres and those with SEND, which will hit the most vulnerable Lambeth residents who are reliant on the help and support that the local authority provides?

**Party: Green**

Answer:

The council's budget proposals have been put forward in the context of continued government cuts in our spending. Having found £230 million since 2010, we now have to find an additional £43 million over the next four years. It is clear that whatever the Prime Minister's rhetoric, for local government austerity is far from over.

On top of that, the government has reduced and restricted the Dedicated Schools Grant, which is partially used to fund children's centres and services for residents with Special Educational Needs and Disability.

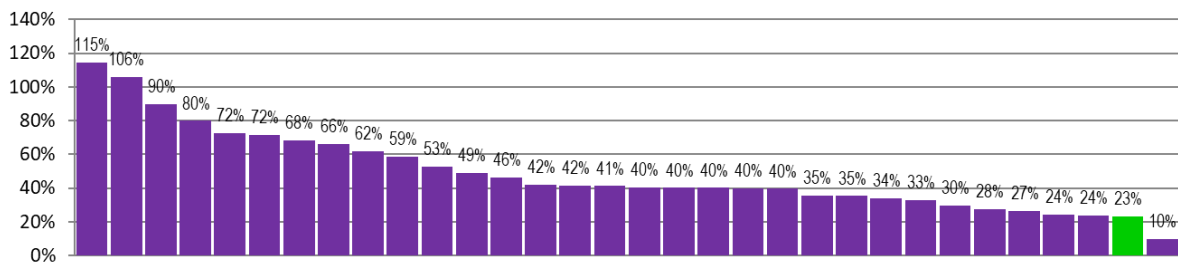
This comes at a time when demand on services, particularly for SEND, is increasing. There has been further pressure on SEND services following the extension of the age range to now include users up to 25 years. We are also experiencing increasing cost pressures on existing care packages as well as new proposals. These pressures are currently estimated at £4.2 million, almost three times the amount that the council is putting in reserves.

Councils across London and the rest of the country are lobbying Central Government strongly to increase the DSG funding for SEND and to restore the flexibilities to local councils to move funding between blocks based on local needs.

For children's centres, this also means £1.4 million less funding for children's centres since 2018. While we have mitigated that in this financial year, it is no longer possible for the council to absorb this additional budget pressure on top of the cuts that the council faces. However, despite the challenge, the council is consulting on plans that will protect 18 Lambeth children's centres, the 3<sup>rd</sup> most in London.

Having previously used reserves to reduce the impact of cuts to our services in previous years and to invest more in children's services in advance of the Ofsted inspection which has now produced an improved rating, we are now having to consider how to ensure we have sufficient reserves for the council. We currently have the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest reserves in London, at just 23% of the Net Budget Requirement.

## Total reserves as % of adj. NBR 2018/19



The proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy includes topping up general reserves by £1.5m per year for the next three years. This would increase unallocated reserves to just over 10% by 2023. Reserves act as a working balance to help cushion the impact of volatility in net expenditure or income across financial years, to smooth the flow of funds when the council faces in-year cuts and as a contingency to unexpected events or emergencies.

In particular, it is important that the council increases its unallocated reserve levels to around 10% of the Net Budget requirement (the minimum amount recommended to be prudent by CIPFA) to deal with an unprecedented period of uncertainty. The UK is less than 3 months away from the proposed exit from the European Union and the increasingly real prospect of no deal which could have a significant impact on our residents and on the council.

The impact of Brexit has delayed the finalising of the local government settlement, meaning that the council is being forced to set its 2019/20 budget without confirmed figures on what government grants we will have in less than 3 months time. And we are entering a period where the council will be self-sufficient, with council services for our most vulnerable residents funded by council tax and businesses rates which are tied to the economic performance of the country and the borough.

At a time of rising demand and huge uncertainty, it is prudent for the council to consider investing modest sums into our reserves to ensure the council is prepared for the difficulties ahead.

## 2. Councillor Tim Briggs

**To: Leader of the Council, Councillor Lib Peck**

### Improvement of Lambeth's policies

The Conservative alternative budget and manifesto before the May 2018 local elections set out a number of promises, including measures to:

- Stop Labour-Lambeth from losing half a million pounds a year staging outdoor events in parks and commons;
- Reverse the cuts to adult social care made by Labour councillors;
- Install electric car-charging points from lampposts;
- Properly support the London Living Wage for all suppliers and contractors;

- Ensure that tenants are safe from fire risks, after basic fire safety checks were missed for years;
- Build new homes on council-owned land like Wandsworth;
- Achieve huge savings by setting up a centralised contracts team through which all contracts with suppliers are tendered and managed, and reducing the scope for corruption;
- Copy many of the above Conservative-Wandsworth policies to give children the best start in life, Wandsworth being now the 4<sup>th</sup> best place in the whole country for children from disadvantaged families to grow up and be successful;
- Set up a voluntary fund for top-rate council taxpayers.

However, most of these Conservative policies have now been adopted by Labour councillors. This is great news for Lambeth residents.

Will Labour-Lambeth now stop pretending that the 'evil Tories' are the cause of every challenge they face, given that Labour councillors now appear to be adopting Conservative policies, with the added bonus that residents might finally experience a more grown-up politics.

Can Labour cabinet members tell us what specific plans they have to meet Conservative party representatives to further improve Lambeth's policies, and thereby bring the borough up to Wandsworth standards?

**Party: Conservative**

Answer: Leader's Office

I cannot comment on the Conservative party's manifesto for the 2018 local elections as I'm not sure it ever made it out of the printers but I am always happy to listen to Councillor Briggs' suggestions.

It is impressive that Lambeth Conservatives claim credit for policies like the London Living Wage when Lambeth under Labour has proudly been a Living Wage employer since 2012 whilst Conservative Wandsworth shamefully refuses to pay its staff the London Living Wage.

I welcome his support for our plans for voluntary council tax and protecting services from cuts, though it is a shame that we are having to consider this in the absence of decent funding and powers from the Conservative government in Westminster.

Despite the relentless austerity to local services from the Tories that Cllr Briggs has supported since 2014, I'm proud that Lambeth is also one of the best places in the country for social mobility for people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**3. Councillor Donatus Anyanwu**

**To: Leader of the Council, Councillor Lib Peck**

**Equality Commission**

I very much welcome the Equality Commission one year report published this month providing an update on the work and progress made on implementing the recommendations set out by Lambeth's Equality Commission. Please can the Leader of the council provide an update on how, collectively with our stakeholders, residents and partners, we are translating our ideas into actions?

**Party: Labour**

Answer:

Last October, Lambeth Council's Cabinet endorsed the recommendations of the Equality Commission and approved a blueprint for implementing them. For more than a year now, we've been working hard on turning our ideas into actions. Every day, people at the council and throughout Lambeth have been working hard to translate the ideas, ambition and hard work behind the Commission into real change.

The one year progress report sets out what has been achieved already, what is in the process of being accomplished, and what still must be done if we are to make Lambeth a fairer place.

For example, we have launched the 'Raising the Game' initiative to help schools create the conditions for black Caribbean pupils to achieve and thrive. As part of the 'Aim High' element of this work, the council welcomed more than 600 pupils ranging from year six to year nine from 34 Lambeth schools to 14 events which took place at the Town Hall, Brixton and Lambeth College, Clapham every day in October.

We have also published our new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategy, which sets out how Lambeth plans to build on the strength of its workforce and community diversity to increase BAME representation throughout the organisation, and already starting to deliver on the commitments it sets out. This includes work with external partners such as Stonewall and Timewise, and on Business in the Community's 'Race in the Workplace' campaign, to achieve recognition as a 'best' employer for diversity and inclusion. Our aim is to not only be a leader in that field, but to set the standard for other organisations and businesses throughout the borough to follow.

It has been a busy year – and a productive one. We acknowledged last year that the council can't do everything on its own, but that we could take a lead. And we have lived up to that promise to be the driving force in the fight against inequality, pushing for action from the council and its partners - including the Mayor of London, national government and the whole community.

I hope that this report shows how far we have come in just a year; that we have already made great strides to achieving the aspirations set out in our report. I hope that, next year, the council will be coming back to you with even more evidence of the work done by all our communities to tackle the scourge of inequality.

**4. Councillor Ben Kind**

**To: Cabinet Member for Environment and Clean Air, Councillor Claire Holland**

**Investment in Our Streets scheme, Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme and other similar initiatives**

What was the total investment spend in each Ward, per year for the Our Streets scheme, Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme or other such initiatives since 2010 and can the Cabinet Member for Environment and Clean Air update us on the latest round of investment by the Council via these schemes?

**Party: Labour**

Answer:

The Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme (NEP) was launched in 2012 as a more community-focused way of making a large impact on an area by implementing small community-led schemes in adjoining wards. Whilst many street improvements were carried out prior to this across the borough, the NEP was the first to aggregate this type of public realm improvement into a themed, area-based, community-driven programme of work.

Phase 1 of NEP ran from 2012 until 2014. It was originally identified by “themes” rather than by ward boundaries but proposed works in the whole of Ferndale, Clapham Town, Larkhall, Stockwell and Vassall the northern half of Coldharbour and the streets of Herne Hill ward north of Coldharbour Lane. Because of this, at the beginning of the programme in 2012/13, spend was not separated from the general highways spend, therefore it isn’t possible to identify lines in the ledger that refer to the NEP as opposed to other highways improvement spend. In subsequent years, any spend in those northernmost streets in Herne Hill ward was included in spend for “Coldharbour”.

Whilst costs arising from NEP were separately recorded from other highways spend in 2013/14 and 2014/15, they were not broken down on a ward-by-ward basis. From 2016/17 onwards, costs arising from NEP and the subsequent Our Streets programme have been recorded at ward-level.

Therefore, in terms of spend so far I can advise you of the below:

NEP1: Stockwell, Clapham Town, Coldharbour, Larkhall, Ferndale, Oval and Vassall

2012/3 (NEP 1 consultation): spend not available

2013/14 (NEP 1 consultation and construction): £1,660,232

2014/15 (NEP 1 construction): £62,924

NEP2: “Streatham Our Streets”

	St Leonards	Streatham South	Streatham Wells	Thornton
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2016/17	£87,810	£135,012	£95,032	£198,982
2017/18	£95,145	£64,182	£29,945	£68,959
2018/19	£107,173	£21,623	£98,228	£39,634
<b>Total</b>	<b>£290,128</b>	<b>£220,817</b>	<b>£223,205</b>	<b>£307,575</b>

In terms of an update on the current round of investment being undertaken in Gipsy Hill, Knights Hill, Streatham Hill and Thurlow Park wards, consultation took place in 2017 and 2018 working with local residents to identify their key priorities to make their local area cleaner, greener and safer. It is anticipated that these schemes will continue to progress through the detailed design, statutory consultation and delivery phases throughout 2019 and onwards.

In terms of spend so far on this round of the Our Streets programme, please see the table below:

NEP3: Our Streets (incorporating Norwood CLIP):

	Gipsy Hill	Knights Hill	Streatham Hill	Thurlow Park
2018/19 to date	£8,344	£6,998	£21,430	£12,649
2018/19 yet to come	£91,000	£88,000	£100,000	£60,000
2019/20 forecast	£100,656	£105,002	£78,570	£127,351
<b>Forecast Total</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>

## 5. Councillor Pauline George

To: Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Ed Davie

### Improving children's healthcare

What is the council doing to improve the health of Lambeth's children?

Answer:

The council is committed to improving the health of Lambeth's children's through a partnership and multi-faceted approach.

We are improving the health of Lambeth children's from the early years. We have our health visiting service, comprehensive breastfeeding offer, and programmes focussing on diet and nutrition alongside our integrated early years pathway for those children in the first five years

of life. We also have the Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) which works with the most vulnerable children in the four most vulnerable wards in the borough to reduce a range of inequalities including in health and demonstrates the importance of a diverse and coordinated approach to improving the lives of Lambeth's children.

In schools, we have commissioned a school nursing service which plays a key role in supporting health promotion messages in schools. Our integrated commissioning team which works across the CCG and Council is working on integrating and improving services for our children with more complex needs. The team is undertaking a community therapies review, as well as managing a transformation programme to integrate our children's community nursing teams. We are particularly committed to improving the mental health of our children. We know that young people today face pressures that older generations didn't. We are working to transform our CAMHs services, to ensure that emotional health and wellbeing needs are addressed earlier, and in a more effective manner.

In the wider community, we've ensured that children's health remains a top priority. We introduced a ban on fast food outlets within 400 metres of the boundary of a primary or secondary schools as part of our 'healthy high streets' approach. Last summer we piloted a 'Holiday Hunger' scheme supported by the Mayor of London's 'Mayor's Fund for London'. Brixton Library and Brixton Soup Kitchen as well as other local businesses offered hot meals for families. Lambeth has been consistently ranked as the number one London Borough in tackling Food Poverty by 'Beyond the Food Bank'. To protect children's lungs, we've introduced a ban on smoking in Lambeth's playgrounds including in our parks and estates, In addition, The Children and Young People's Health Partnership (CYPHP) which works with children and young people with two or more common long-term conditions.

## **6. Councillor Joanna Reynolds**

**To: Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture, Councillor Sonia Winifred**

### **Events of Clapham Common**

Clapham Common is a very important green space in the Clapham community, Lambeth and London. With poor air quality, the need for areas such as Clapham Common with a mix of trees, grassland and vegetation is ever more important. What steps are the council taking to ensure that events on Clapham Common, such as Winterville, do not cause long-lasting or irreparable damage to the common and do not impinge on residents' use of large parts of the common for sustained periods of time?

**Party: Labour**

Answer:

I share your appreciation for Clapham Common as an important green space. I am very proud of Lambeth's Parks and my pride was matched with the recognition from The Good Parks for London Report 2018. We are the highest-performing council to have services delivered in-house rather than contracted in. Our highest marks included quality and events. Parks for London score the events category based on proof of a mix of "charity and commercial events



that increase public use of parks and promote social cohesion.” Parks and open spaces have a long history of providing entertainment such as concerts and funfairs and I know that the range of uses for Clapham Common is part of what makes it so important to the community.

The council is committed to ensuring a balance between uses in our green spaces. In order to ensure an appropriate balance between uses, no more than 10% of the Common is ever fenced off for an event and Winterville takes up approximately 6% of the Common. All event producers are required to pay a damage deposit and must fund a programme of ground restoration works agreed with parks officers. Officers work hard with event organisers to adopt strategies and techniques which reduce grounds damage. The Council is in the process of committing funding to pay for a wholesale regeneration of the main events site on Clapham Common in 2020, which will result in a high quality sward, able to recover more quickly after events in the future. Income from events is a vital source of funding for enhancing parks, particularly in the case of Clapham Common, which has received £131,000 in Parks Improvement Levy funding from events during 2018/19 alone. This investment has helped the Common achieve Green Flag status for the first time in 2018; and Silver Gilt awards under London in Bloom in 2017 and 2018.

We are currently in the process of reviewing our events strategy and I would welcome engagement in this process.

## **7. Councillor Joseph Corry-Roake**

**To: Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Paul Gadsby**

### **Works on Oaklands and Notre Dame estate**

Residents on Oaklands and Notre Dame estates welcome past renovations and repairs that have been conducted by Lambeth Council but there are examples of work not being adequately finished. What steps is the cabinet member taking to ensure all works are properly finished and what plans does he have to bring more homes in Clapham Common ward up to the Lambeth Housing Standard?

**Party: Labour**

Answer:

I am proud of our unprecedented investment of around £499 million since 2012 in upgrading over 21,000 homes by bringing them up to the Lambeth Housing Standard, making our residents' homes warmer, drier and safe. This has included major internal upgrades with many homes receiving new bathrooms, kitchens and other works, as well as extensive external refurbishments to communal and outdoor spaces. This is a programme that has been driven by our residents, with the LHS principles being set in consultation with our residents.

At present, 73% of homes within the Clapham Common Ward are Lambeth Housing Standard (LHS) compliant. The remaining properties will be brought up to the LHS as part of the 2019/20 and the emerging 2020/21 programmes.

Aside from separate works to install new door entry systems, homes on the Notre Dame estate have benefited from brand new kitchens and bathrooms. The replacement of the communal heating and hot water system on Oaklands estate was completed during May 2017 and we also installed a new door entry system to six buildings.

It is important that all works are signed off to a good standard. For example, with Oaklands estate, the works were signed off by independent consultants together with our Technical Services team. Officers are not aware of any outstanding works; although they have attended a number of homes since completion during 2018 to undertake adjustments to the system.

## **8. Councillor Jackie Meldrum**

**To: Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Ed Davie**

### **Strategic Health Partnership Plans**

There was a lot of opposition across the country to the government's introduction of Strategic Health Partnerships/Plans (STPs) three years ago. Please can the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care provide a comprehensive update on the progress of Our Healthier South East London STP (OHSEL) covering the 6 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) coterminous with the boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark & Lambeth. Lambeth is innovating the integration of health and social care starting with a Mental Health Alliance. How will the government's move to transform STPs into Integrated Care Systems (ICS) impact on OHSEL?

### **Party: Labour**

Answer: Adult and Health, Fiona Connolly

The NHS Long Term Plan published on 10 Jan 2019 may further impact upon the NHS approach at South East London and we will be working with colleagues in the NHS to understand this over the next few months. In 2018 the NHS partners in South East London have proposed a 'system of systems' for integrated care across the NHS which was discussed at the last Health and Wellbeing Board. This supports work across South East London on working together around hospital services and more specialist mental health services. It proposes that integration with social care and wider council services should be delivered on a borough footprint at a pace determined by the local health system and council. The December cabinet discussed and endorsed a paper on Lambeth Together our local borough based approach to integration and the development of a neighbourhood based approach to promoting health and wellbeing and providing health and care.

As you say, Lambeth is innovating the integration of health and social care. For example, we have worked to transform our mental health services. We have worked with community partners including Black Thrive, an initiative to inform how mental health services can improve and genuinely meet the needs of black communities. Our Living Well network prioritises prevention and early engagement with residents with poor mental health. We've seen a 40%

reduction in people requiring acute psychiatric care in only two years. In the context of reduced funding for mental health provision, Lambeth council set up the Living Well Network Alliance; a partnership of the Council, Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, Certitude and Thamesreach. The Alliance is part of the broader Lambeth Together initiative which creates a fully joined up health and care system.

## **9. Councillor Nicole Griffiths**

**To: Leader of the Council, Councillor Lib Peck**

During the Lambeth Safer Neighbourhood Board Annual General Meeting on Tulse Hill estate on 29th November it was made very clear by the Tulse Hill Estate Tenants Resident Association (TRA) that administration and educational resources were needed to support the Youth Club on the estate. Alongside essential maintenance of the playground and football pitch areas and the installation of community noticeboards. Cllr Peck also committed to following through on '5 or 6 projects' mentioned in the Local Neighbourhood Plan. Please can you provide an update on the progress made and if the projects include the actions requested by residents such as installing upgraded lighting throughout the estate, entry gates and CCTV?

**Party: Green**

Answer:

The meeting at Tulse Hill estate following the recent tragic death of John Ogunjobi was understandably one where emotions ran high and lots of people expressed their concern about safety in their community. I attended on behalf of the council to offer my condolences to all those affected by the tragic events and also to ensure that the council listened to local people and responded properly to the suggestions were made.

As you say in your question, lots of positive suggestions were made and the council has been determined to deliver on these. A number of further meetings and discussions have been held between officers, local councillors and representatives from the Tulse Hill Tenants and Residents Association since then and a number of actions have been progressed including:

- A specification to refurbish the multi games area has been agreed. This will include new lighting, increasing the height of the cage with netting across the top as well as a new 3g grass surface. This work will start at the beginning of February 2019. It has been agreed local young people will be involved in the design and are currently involved in discussions about its use.
- Additional CCTV has already been fitted to two high risk blocks on the estate and a further 6 cameras are to be deployed over the next two months
- Statutory consultation will commence on the implementations of an estate wide Traffic Management Order to introduce resident only parking. In addition, designs are being sought for a barrier entry onto the estate. A follow up resident meeting, including young people, has been arranged to discuss options for an improved road layout and limited road closures
- Works to the door entry system, subject to Section 20 Consultation, will commence in early 2019.

We are committed to working with residents and the TRA to ensure that we can support their efforts to make their estate a safer and better place to live.

## **10. Councillor Scarlett O'Hara**

**To: Cabinet Member for Planning, Investment & New Homes, Councillor Matthew Bennett**

### **Creative Enterprise Zone**

Following the exciting news announced last month that Lambeth is to be the hub of one of London's new creative enterprise zones (CEZ) please can you provide an update on what plans the council has to support job creation and business growth within the culture and creative sectors.

### **Party: Labour**

Answer:

There is lots of action already underway in delivering 'Creative ways to grow' – Lambeth's first Creative and Digital Industries Strategy for Growth (CDI Strategy).

In a boost to the town centre by the Mayor of London, Brixton is one of six successful London areas to be designated a Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ). A £550,000 Mayoral investment, alongside other existing and planned investments, will aim to help attract and support artists and creative businesses and develop skills and jobs for local people in the creative and digital industries.

Some of the projects within the CEZ programme include:

- A new business start-up programme will be put in place to help local people start their creative and digital businesses in Brixton
- An international art fair – Brixton Biennale – will be established to showcase international creativity in Brixton CEZ
- Lambeth's Local Plan will adopt an Affordable Workspace policy to secure affordable workspace and to safeguard and grow Lambeth's Creative and Digital Industries
- A Cultural Education Officer will be appointed to foster collaboration between schools and creative industries
- A new permanent creative, science and technology workspace at Beehive Place

Brixton has recently seen the opening of London's largest affordable workspace at International House with all businesses paying the London Living Wage. Several exciting organisations have moved into the building – including high growth creative-tech company Resi; Amazing TV Productions; Business Launchpad (supporting young entrepreneurs); and Capital Enterprise – London's membership body for entrepreneur support providers.

There are many other actions being progressed from the CDI Strategy. For example:

- Lambeth has been successful in bidding and winning an £8m 'Strategic Investment Pot' allocation for the 'South London Innovation Corridor' initiative, in partnership with Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth. The South London Innovation Corridor' initiative will direct investment into central and local growth clusters – supporting a range of workspace and innovative business support and talent development initiatives.
- The council's revised Local Plan is seeking to bring forward measures to protect and grow workspace, a new approach to public art and better protection for pubs and venues because night life is a crucial part of our cultural economy.

To read the CDI Strategy and to showcase some of the borough's existing creative businesses and workspaces, the Lambeth Now website has been updated which can be viewed at [www.lambethnow.co.uk/cdi](http://www.lambethnow.co.uk/cdi)

## **11. Councillor Pete Elliott**

**To: Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Paul Gadsby**

Tenants on the Clapham Park estate who have lived there for up to 12 years face eviction by Metropolitan Housing who want to demolish their homes. They are being offered the minimum amount of compensation under the Home Loss (Prescribed Amounts) (England) Regulations and are not being rehoused by Metropolitan. If they do not accept these terms they will be taken off the bidding list for council homes and have to begin the whole bidding process again. Will the Cabinet member change this council's policy to provide protection for all residents and ensure that no tenant on the Clapham Park estate is removed from the council house waiting list and have to begin whole process again?

**Party: Green**

Answer:

It is just not true that assured shorthold tenants in Metropolitan properties are being taken off the Council's housing list if they do not accept the terms offered by Metropolitan and Thames Valley Housing (MTVH). All Lambeth residents are entitled to join the Council's housing register and bid for permanent homes, subject to the normal eligibility criteria that applies to everyone. It would be helpful if the Green Party could check their facts more thoroughly before making statements that could cause unnecessary concerns amongst residents.

The council has met with MTVH to discuss this matter, and have been working with them to offer permanent housing to the residents and where residents move to alternative assured shorthold tenancies will continue to be eligible for rehousing by MTVH for two years. The Council will also award higher priority on its own housing list for two years to those residents who secure private rented accommodation. This council is committed to ensuring vulnerable people get the help they need despite the government's continued cuts to local services and its indifference to the housing crisis.

## **12. Councillor Josh Lindsay**

**To: Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Paul Gadsby**

### **Private Landlords**

Like many wards in Brixton and Clapham, Ferndale has a high number of private renters. Can the Cabinet Member for Housing update us on what the council is doing to crack down on those landlords who fail to provide their tenants with the standard of accommodation they deserve?

**Party: Labour**

Answer:

In Lambeth, we are committed to tackling poor landlords, improving conditions in the private rented sector and to supporting our private tenants. We are increasing the focus on enforcing higher standards and prosecuting rogue landlords that cut corners. We have already secured a £10,000 fine against a rogue landlord who was putting his desire to make money ahead of the safety of his tenants and we also have a number of other potential prosecutions underway.

We secured £314k in funding last year to tackle rogue landlords and we have used this money to establish a multi-agency task force which is identifying and tackling poor housing standards in rogue landlord properties. On top of this, we have recruited more staff who are tasked with getting out there and investigating suspected cases where landlords are not conforming to their responsibilities and requirements.

Later on this year, we will be launching our new Private Sector Housing Strategy, which will set out in more detail how we will support people who are renting in the private sector over the coming years. The strategy is being informed by extensive research and consultation including 500 face-to-face interviews with private renters in the borough.

## **13. Councillor Liz Atkins**

**To: Deputy Leader of the Council (Children and Young People), Councillor Jennifer Brathwaite**

### **Update on consultation of children's centres**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the consultation on changes to Lambeth's children's centres and how we are ensuring that parents have full opportunity to be involved?

**Party: Labour**

Answer:

Our consultation is designed to ensure we gain the highest possible involvement from our parents and families. The consultation on our children's centres runs for a 10 week period in

total (closing 10<sup>th</sup> February), which is well within Government recommendations for statutory consultation periods. It also takes into account the festive holiday period.

The consultation process we have developed is robust, and aims to engage all service users, staff and other stakeholders. It is based on our usual consultation offer plus some other enhancements. This is based on current Government and Equalities Commission guidelines and consists of:

- Online survey and booklet
- Hard copy booklets and surveys in Children's Centres
- Posters in Children's Centres and other key public places such as GP surgeries and health centres
- Leaflets in libraries
- Emails to stakeholder lists
- Letters/emails to all service users
- Face to face consultation support meetings at the Town Hall
- Face to face meetings at Children's Centres
- Using our translation service to translate the booklet into other languages if requested.
- There is Google translate on the website to help people engage with the consultation
- Staff in centres have been briefed to support people engage with the consultation

Our face-to-face meetings, which are to be held at various times during the day in children's centres, are clearly stated in the publicity material, and started on the 8<sup>th</sup> January. They are advertised on the Events section of the Lambeth Council website. We will be working closely with children's centre staff to ensure that families are encouraged and supported to attend. We will also work with centres to provide crèche facilities and will provide additional funding to support this, but are mindful that space and staff ratios will limit the number of children who can be offered spaces.

We have also taken into account those of our population who may not have English as a first language. The consultation booklet can be translated into other languages if requested. Google translate is also available to help people engage with the consultation online should they wish to choose that method.

We have given careful consideration as to whether providing booklets / copies of the survey in other languages would be helpful, and are also aware of wider literacy needs. We are therefore working to ensure that parent's views are captured in a variety of ways. At the meetings held with Better Start workers and children's centre managers (held on 5<sup>th</sup> December) staff were clear that they felt best able to support centre users to complete the survey, and we discussed ways they might do that in stay and play sessions and so on.

We are also scheduling sessions in children's centres as outlined above, and are proposing to work with our commissioned ESOL providers to ensure that ESOL learners at children's centres are supported to complete the survey.

The general face-to-face consultation sessions being held at Lambeth Town Hall are also designed to support those with low literacy, whose main language is not English or who have difficulty in accessing the internet in participating in our consultations.

By means of a practical update: as of 7<sup>th</sup> January we have received over 250 responses to the consultation.

#### **14. Councillor Jonathan Bartley**

**To: Cabinet Member for Environment and Clean Air, Councillor Claire Holland**

##### **Workplace Parking Levy**

Will the cabinet member explore the idea of a workplace parking levy in Lambeth, as introduced by Nottingham Council and currently being considered by Camden Council?

**Party: Green**

Answer:

The Mayor's Transport Strategy commits, through TfL to investigate proposals for the next generation of road user charging, and specifically references Workplace Parking Levy's (WPL). Lambeth's draft Local Implementation Plan, which is currently out to consultation until 17 December also makes reference to WPL's: "The borough's main employment centres are in the north of the borough where commuting by car is not a problem and we would not look to introduce a WPL in isolation from other neighbouring boroughs. Where commuter parking is problematic we will support the extension of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) to prioritise resident parking and promote other uses of the kerbside." It is considered that a WPL is better suited to an outer London context within an easily defined and managed zone with multiple large employers, low levels of access to public transport and associated levels of car parking – Hounslow is considering a WPL for example.

The lack of accurate, up to date information relating to off-street employee parking in Lambeth also makes it is very difficult to calculate operational costs. For example, Lambeth has relatively few, larger workplaces where employee parking is available and could be easily monitored / enforced whereas there are many large organisations who offer off street parking to their employees in Nottingham. Of these, a number might be expected to be exempted from any charge e.g. NHS facilities. It may not be practical to apply charges to smaller sites and these have indeed been exempted in other WPL schemes / proposals. It is also worth noting that much of the parking consented in new development in Lambeth over recent years is for disabled use only and it is reasonable to assume that this would also be exempted from any WPL scheme. Significant future development is expected in growth areas where emerging Lambeth and GLA standards would require it to be car free. The council itself retains very few public car parks.

#### **15. Councillor Lucy Caldicott**

**To: Cabinet Member for Housing, Paul Gadsby**

##### **Help for rough sleepers**



What action has the council taken to help rough sleepers during the winter period?

**Party: Labour**

Answer

During the winter months Lambeth has a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) which sets out the arrangements that the council will put into place to ensure that people sleeping rough have access to emergency accommodation during extreme cold weather. Under this protocol, the council, partner agencies and commissioned services carry out prompt action to ensure all people sleeping rough have the opportunity to access shelter.

We are committed to helping people to move off of the street and into more permanent accommodation and we have commissioned a number of services to provide around 480 bed-spaces, known as the Vulnerable Adults Pathway (VAP) within various specialist hostels and shared supported housing schemes. The pathway assists people sleeping rough and single homeless people with support needs.

A commissioned outreach service referred to as the Lambeth Safer Streets Team (SST) conducts outreach shifts seven days per week at different times right across the borough to ensure they are locating all people sleeping rough in Lambeth.

Lambeth recently securing funding which part of has been used to open a night shelter run by Thames Reach which offers flexible short term accommodation for up to 12 individuals who are currently sleeping rough, some of whom may not have a local connection or access to public funds. On top of this, in partnership with Thames Reach, just prior to Christmas I had the honour of opening the brand-new Martha Jones House hostel in Vauxhall. Not only does this brilliant facility have over 40 bed-spaces, as well as rooms and living spaces, it also provides health and medical services as well as cooking classes, activities and education around food and budgeting, enabling residents to learn new skills and prepare for independent living.